DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 104 745 SO 008 209

AUTHOR Grumet, Madeleine R.
TITLE Existential and Phenomenological Foundations of Currere: Self-Report in Curriculum Inquiry.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Washington, D.C., April 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Curriculum Design; *Curriculum Development; Curriculum Research; *Educational Alternatives; Educational Experience; Educational Objectives; *Educational Philosophy; *Educational Theories; Existentialism; Experience; *Humanistic Education; Philosophy
IDENTIFIERS *Currere Model

ABSTRACT

Traditional models for curriculum theory describe human development as a sum of its parts, organized in a hierarchy leading to operational competencies. The reconceptualist Currere model, originated by William Penar, develops horizontally with energy and learning moving outward and inward rather than upward in a linear trajectory. Educational experience based on this reform requires autobiography, a review of the subject's educational experience; phenomenological description of the subject's present situation, his historical, social, physical life world; and a record of the subject's response, associations and intellections, to a literature work. The theory base for the Currere model is drawn from humanistic philosophy, phenomenology's emphasis on reciprocity of subjectivity and objectivity in the constitution of human knowledge, and existentialism's emphasis on the dialectical relationship of man to his situation. The Currere model returns to the experience of the individual: its idiosyncratic history, its preconceptual foundation, its contextual dependency, and its innate freedom expressed in choice and self-direction. It reconstructs a pathway to the present choice by digging back to identify the encounters that led to it. (Author/DE)

ED104745

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

EXISTENTIAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF CURRERE:

SELF-REPORT IN CURRICULUM INQUIRY

Presented to

AERA

Madeleine R. Grumet
The University of Rochester

1975

SP 008 209

I am a graduate student at the University of Rochester. My course of study is multi-disciplinary, focusing primarily on the social and behavioral sciences and the humanities, designed to investigate the connections that link educational and theatrical experience. In each case the form that shapes and communicates its content is dialogue. The artist, the actor and director interpret their own experience and communicate their metaphors for that experience within dialogue that is dynamic, immediate and communal. Their forms and methods suggest perspectives and methods appropriate to the educator's concerns with curriculum and instruction.

The process of selecting and coordinating the various courses that speak to this topic has revealed them to be conjoined, as are the facets of a crystal, which, as it is turned over in your hand, reveals yet another face, catching, holding and reflecting the light according to its own, particular slant. Gradually, my attention has moved from the artifacts of each discipline, its traditions, language, conventions, to the ways in which these offerings have been devised and delivered. Throughout my studies what has emerged as the fundamental project of each discipline is the effort to determine the adequacy and implications of its own forms. The psychologist, anthropologist, sociologist, philosopher, writer, director, all question the capacity of their methods and metaphors to describe their experience in the world without distorting it, to contain it without reducing it, to analyze it without atomizing it.

The tradeword for these concerns is meta-theory; its ambition is to reveal the implicit presuppositions that the theorist extends into the styles of inquiry, explanation and imagination that he elects. While for some scholars and teachers this scrutiny may merely amount to a fleeting gesture of polite deference to objectivity, one or two introductory lectures devoted to the theory of inquiry and domain assumptions, and then on to knowledge for its own sake, it is imperative that the educator remember that knowledge has no sake, that sake, purpose, goals are human constructions and that knowledge serves those ends. Meta-theory emerges as the essential and enduring concern of the curriculum theorist. While it may appear arrogant to propose my response to my own, idiosyncratic educational experience as a

model for curriculum theory, I must acknowledge it as the source of the words that will follow and hope that it will be helpful in explaining my approach to the topic of reconceptualized inquiry in curriculum.

We reconceptualize not only to update our abstractions, but in the conviction that Sartre voices when he maintains that to name something is to change the world. Thus to reconceptualize is to reform. When we examine the ways in which we construct these forms we discover as Merleau-Ponty has reminded us, that form is not a physical reality, but an object of perception contingent upon a world-view. We see, in Norwood Hanson's terms, with theory-laden vision.

The scrutiny of our forms that is the process of reconceptualization reveals three dimensions to the actions that we take as educators: the political, the phenomenological, the biographical. The political dimension is revealed when we discover who is constructing these forms and for whom they are accessible and useful. The phenomenological dimension is revealed as we discover what kinds of experience and phenomena are the foundations of our forms. The biographical dimension is revealed as we determine the development of these forms in the consciousness of an individual and assess their impact on his past actions and their influence on future choices.

It would be misleading to suggest that reconceptualization is merely descriptive and critical. It is re-form and as such steps down from meta-theory to theory, from criticism to conjecture. The reconceptualist seeks a form whose lines and contours conform to the meanings that he draws from his experience in the world. The general form that emerges may be described as organismic, rather than mechanistic. One way of visualizing the reconceptualist approach is to compare its physical analogue to that of the traditional curriculum paradigm. The traditional view reflected in the methodology of the social sciences, describes human development as a sum of its parts, organized in an incremental hierarchy leading to resolution realized in operational competencies. Imagine, if you will, this form as a series of graduated steps, becoming wider as they ascend. In contrast the form of the reconceptualist is horizontal, rather than vertical, its energy moving outward and inward rather than upward in a linear trajectory. The form is at once centripetal and centrifugal.

Its center is a crossing point where the lines of energy intersect: lines of force drawn into form by the opposition and tension of the dialectic, id/ego, subjectivity/objectivity, community/individuality, consciousness/matter. Mary Caroline Richards conceives of it as a figure-of-eight, a lemniscate. She describes it as a layer in the plant "sometimes only one cell wide - between the tissue and the shoot. It is a crossing point between the earth and the sun. Below, the root hairs grow out in a dense core - think of a beet or a dandelion - the gesture of form radiates from a mid-point outward. Above the foliage arises out of a hollow, drawn by the sun from the periphery. . . . What is enclosed and digging down turns into what is open and lifting up. And vice versa. The two forms are an organic breathing continuum."[1]

The remainder of this paper will discuss the definition of educational experience that grows out of this re-form and the intellectual traditions that support it. Throughout the discussion the definition and its sources will be related to Currere, a research method proposed by William Pinar that provides an alternative to the empirical paradigm. In "Search for a Method" a paper presented to this conference last year, Pinar described a research method that requires autobiography, a review of the subject's educational experience; a phenomenological description of the subject's present situation, his historical, social, physical life-world; and a record of the subject's response, associations and intellections, to a literary work.[2] Currere examines education as it is experienced in the past, present and future of one biography, a method grounded in context and self-report.

Definitions

Whenever we speak of education, we are speaking of man's experience in the world. Despite the unique specificity of each person's perspective, the intentionality of all conscious acts focuses his gaze on some object, real or imagined; he exists always in context. Colloquial assessments of a person's education are often descriptions of that context, the field of his experience. The judgment that one is "well-educated" may be a measure of social class, literacy, years of schooling, travel, the length and breadth of experience. All or any of these measures describe, if

superficially, a person's experience in the world; as such they are more descriptive of his outer status than his inner condition. We seek a definition that will diminish the discrepancy between public performance and private experience.

Consequently, when I designate an experience as educational, I imply that its effect upon its subject transcends the immediate encounter; its season passed, a spore remains and grows roots in the psyche, bringing forth new vegetation, nurtured by that singular, inimitable soil. In other words, an encounter with the world is a generative act, spawning experience, a hybrid of objectivity and subjectivity, whose very birth modifies and extends and finally transcends its inheritance.

Just as art requires the imposition of subjectivity upon the objective stuff of the world, and is embodied in that stuff, in its materials, forms and limitations, so education requires a blending of objectivity with the unique subjectivity of the person, its infusion into the structures and shapes of his psyche.

Viewed from this perspective, education emerges as a metaphor for a person's dialogue with the world of his experience. We are tempted to make the analogy more economical, to eliminate the middleman of dialogue and to speak of education only in terms of experience. But that formula, for all its artful simplicity, would reduce its epistemological subject to a scientific object by reducing the person who is able to interpret, repudiate or affirm his experience to a tabula rasa upon which the world makes its marks, a template of societal conditioning. To delete dialogue from this concept of educational experience would be to relegate learning to a series of reactive, conditioned behaviors best described as training. Although that description of existence wherein man becomes his experience may satisfy the behaviorists, it is rejected by the existential philosophers in their acknowledgement of and commitment to human freedom. In the words of Merleau-Ponty, "I am the absolute source, my existence does not stem from my antecedents, from my physical and social environment; instead it moves out towards them and sustains them, for I alone bring into being for myself the tradition which I elect to carry on."[3] It is this dialogue of each person, his idiosyncratic history and genetic make-up with his situation, its place, people, artifacts, ideas that we call educational experience.

Traditions

Any definition of education requires a definition of knowledge; any consideration of epistemology requires an ontological foundation. The theory base of Currere's exploration of educational experience is drawn from humanistic philosophy, phenomenology's emphasis on the reciprocity of subjectivity and objectivity in the dynamic constitution of human knowledge, and existentialism's emphasis on the dialectical relationship of man to his situation. This is to say, educational experience can be approached in a phenomenological examination of the relationship of one person to his world.

In order to speak of educational experience we turn to phenomenology and existential philosophy, whose spokesman have wrenched their interpretations of experience away from systems of positivism and subjective idealism in order to render, accurately and specifically, their experience of themselves in the world. The writings of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty describe existence as being-in-the-world. They recognize the existence of the world without explaining its facticity and accept our experience of it without first establishing its causality. The natural and social sciences that attempt explanations of that causality are to them merely second-order expressions of the Lebenswelt, the world of lived experience. Thus, for the phenomenologist, knowledge of the world requires knowledge of self- as knower of the world.

This paradoxical identification of objectivity with subjectivity, each realized through the other, creates an intellectual tension that is as intolerable as it is generative. Paradox dominates the phenomenological work of Edmund Husserl, whose insistence upon the epoche requires that we distance ourselves from our experience in order to come closer to it. Paradox is the very structure of the consciousness that Sartre describes as the being that is what it is not and is not what it is. The contradictions of paradox preclude certainty, an understandably attractive feature of any rationale that may be employed to guide actions and decisions.

Recent criticism of Piagetian theory questions its capacity for paradox and ambiguity. Anthropologist, Terence Turner resists applying the developmental schemes

of Piaget to studies of ethnography because they lead in a linear trajectory to plateaus of equilibrium, understating the contradictory, irrational characteristics of artistic, religious, and social experience. Klaus Riegel proposes a further stage of cognitive development to follow the final stage of formal operations which he calls dialectical operations and maintains that at the "levels of dialectical operations at maturity, the individual does not necessarily equilibrate these conflicts, but is ready to live with these contradictions; stronger yet, the individual accepts these contradictions as a basic property of thought and creativity."[4]

Similarly, Charles Hampden-Turner in Radical Man identifies a tolerance for paradox and dialectic as a requirement of full psycho-social development. He cites Scott Fitzgerald: "The test of a first rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function."[5] From Klaus Riegel and Hampden-Turner, spokesmen from the disciplines of psychology and sociology, the most recent influences upon education's model of man, we hear tentative overtures to a methodology that acknowledges the contradictory and paradoxical nature of human experience.

We cannot talk about education without talking about a dialectic between man and his world, a dialectic that holds all the mysteries and ironies of paradox, the apparent polarities of subjectivity and objectivty, immanence and transcendence, particularization and generalization, essence and existence dissolve into reciprocity, each constituting the other.

Admittedly, it is a grandiose ambition to imagine a research method which will embrace both poles of the dialectic, and not relinquish subjectivity to objectivity or vice versa. William Pinar's approach is to scale the inquiry down to the experiential field of the individual. Currere, the root of curriculum, is Pinar's term for educational experience; it describes the race not only in terms of the course, the readiness of the runner, but seeks to know the experience of the running of one particular runner, on one particular track, on one particular day, in one particular wind. Thus, to talk of education as the dialogue of a man and his world is not to break down this complex interaction into separate parts, subjecting each

to a distinct isolated analysis. Nor are we describing education as a magical transformation, a metamorphosis of self into the forms of the world. Educational experience is a process that takes on the world without appropriating that world, that projects the self into the world without dismembering that self, a process of synthesis and totalization in which all the participants in the dialectic simultaneously maintain their identities and surpass themselves.

Approaches to curriculum are too often drawn to one pole of the dialectic or the other. Too often, those charged to design educational curriculum flee from paradox, from ambiguity, from self-report to mechanistic and analytic descriptions of the process of education. Although studies of the cognitive processes and the organization of the academic disciplines illuminate parts of the whole, they isolate one agent in the negotiation from the others in order to study its activity. And if the world were experienced in discretely organized units by persons who could isolate emotional responses from intellectual ones, past from present, present from future, I from me, me from us, programmed instruction, behavioral objectives and other products of the "divide and conquer" approach to learning might be justified. They are not; further depersonalization and fragmentation of human experience distorts it and estranges us not only from each other but from ourselves as well. When we refuse to reduce the educational process to training, the assembly line production of skills and socialized psyches standardized to society's measure, we must forsake the statistic and consult the educational experience of one person. Thus, my first request of a reconceptualized curriculum inquiry is the safe return of my own voice. What may appear to be an atavistic methodology is the logical response to the domination of the empirical paradigm. There is a parallel to this state of affairs in clinical medicine. After treating an ailing patient with drugs, and other drugs to counter the effects of the initial prescriptions, and still other drugs to counter the effects of the antidotes, the physician trapped in a web of treatment, must remove the patient from all drug therapy and start once more from the beginning by taking a history. Our current responsibility is to rescue our patient from the results of our recent attentions.

In The Explanation of Social Behavior, Harre and Secord examine the deficiencies of an empiricism, that striving for objectivity, discounts the distortions of the lab setting, concentrates on behaviors that are quantifiable, and on a passive, manipulated subject who surrenders his capacity to direct his own behavior and to report his own experience to the experimenter. Difficulties arise in applying the traditional research methods of the social sciences to educational research when we discover what it is that these inquiries are designed to reveal. Traditional empirical research is designed to describe behavior of individuals and groups, and to ascertain those conditions that inhibit or encourage its manifestation. The definition of education presented here, though it involves actions, is less concerned with act than with the actor's understanding of it and attitude toward it. Schutz's defense of phenomenological reflection, cited in Chamberlin's essay, "Phenomenological Methodology" is pertinent here. "Meaning does not lie in experience. Rather, those experiences are meaningful which are grasped reflectively. The meaning is the way in which the Ego regards its experience. The meaning lies in the attitudes of the Ego toward that part of its stream of consciousness which has already flowed by."[6]

Admittedly, self-report may not insure an accurate description of behavior or identification of its causes. The work of Jones and Nesbitt indicates the disparity between the account of the observor, who tends to attribute the behavior of the actor to his personality traits, and that of the actor who attributes the cause of his own behavior to the situations in which it occurs. Nevertheless, the focus of the research described here is educational experience. Rather than attempting to describe or evaluate behaviors or establish their causality, we are interested in determining what it is that the subject makes of them. Indeed, Harre and Secord predict that the "most profound discoveries of social psychology will be made by those who, while playing a part, filling a role and so on, can be their own audience."[7]

It may be no coincidence that significant autobiographies are written by great men. That self awareness that withdraws from the immediacy of experience, from the opaque deposits of past events and achievements may be the source of those

achievements and experiences as well as the source of their history. Self-report provides an attitude as well as a process that may protect us from becoming thing-like, obsessed with being, forgetful of the perspectivism of our experience, mistaking it for an object.

If we must calibrate education, then we might say that we are educated to the extent that we are conscious of our experience and to the degree that we are freed by this knowledge to act through skills required to transform our world. By defining education as awareness of one's experience, I am not confining that definition to introspection, for that would assume that experience resides merely inside one's cranium, draping its walls with the voluptuous and decadent hangings of sentiment and libido. Experience is outside and inside, and the skills that are required to know it are as diverse as experience itself; language, logic, the use of tools to scan the skies, the earth, the eye.

In the writings of Edmund Husserl, mathematician, psychologist, philosopher, we find a model for the process of disciplined reflection that takes the consciousness of one individual as its data and develops a system of hermeneutics for the explication of that text. The principles and processes of phenomenology that are most pertinent to our consideration of Currere are its emphasis on the reciprocity of subjectivity and objectivity in the constitution of meanings, its attempts to describe immediate, pre-conceptual experience, and the distancing and bracketing required to accomplish these ends.

The term constitution was used by Husserl to describe not the creation of subjectivity, nor the discovery of objectivity. It is founded upon Brentano's postulation of intentionality as a structure of consciousness: all consciousness is consciousness of something; thus, subject, precisely as subject, can be present to consciousness purely through the object that it intends. The typewriter, this paper, tomorrow's dinner, the Garden of Eden, pain, self are all objects of consciousness. Objective constitution is the life of the subject; knowledge of self becomes knowledge of self as knower of the world, not just as a passive recipient of stimulii from the objective world, not as an expression of latent subjectivity, but as a bridge between these two domains, a mediator. The homunculus of educational experience resides in each cogitation.

Suspending judgment about the "real" world, Husserl directed complete attention to phenomena, objects as they are evident to consciousness. Rejecting the determinism that portrays consciousness as the passive recipient of sense impressions, and the idealism that denies full knowledge of the world to man but consoles him with the constructions of his own psyche, Husserl focused on the meanings that grew out of man's encounter with the world:

> When phenomenology examines objects of consciousness - regardless of any kind, whether real or ideal - it deals with these exclusively as objects of the immediate consciousness. The description - which attempts to grasp the concrete and rich phenomena of the cogitationes - must constantly glance back from the side of the object to the side of consciousness, and pursue the general existing connections.[3]

It was to clarify these connections that he employed the terms "noesis" to describe the quality and kind of psychic activity involved in the act of consciousness, i.e., feeling, remembering imagining - and noema, the meaning of the intentional act of consciousness, that is not tied to that act alone, but to a unifying identity that gives meanings to a series of intentional acts of consciousness. Currere's reliance upon the lived experience of the individual draws support from Husserl's conviction that it was only in the freshness and immediacy of encounter that certain knowledge could reside. To that end Husserl devised a system of disciplined reflection designed to determine the adequacy and fullness of this knowledge. The knowledge would be given primordially, uncontaminated by theories of formal logic or the natural sciences; it would be grounded in the lived experience of the subject.

In the Cartesian Meditations consciousness is described as a stream of experience, having its own history, initiated in primal encounters, non-verbal, pre-predicative instants of experience in the world, extended into a horizon of confirming harmonious appearances and conceptual syntheses.

In this phenomenology of consciousness the distinction between the terms encounter and experience is made explicit. An encounter is consciousness of external reality; experience is awareness of immanent objects. What is sensed is not different from the act of sensing. All encounters are known to consciousness through experience as immanent objects and the transition from encounter in the world to

experience as immanent objects, is established. In The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness, edited by Heidegger, Husserl describes an immanent flow of now-points (also termed primal apprehensions and partial intentions). Just as he described the identity of a transcendent object as being developed and confirmed through multiple presentations, profiles, perspectives, he describes immanent objects achieving meaning in a temporal manifold. In this flow of pure subjectivity, we experience a series of now-points each carrying horizons of past and imminent nows, passing into phases of retention or extending into phases of protension. Elapsed now points are retained and are present to consciousness as part of this temporal manifold.

It is this pre-reflective flow of now-points that Merleau-Ponty evokes when he speaks of pre-predicative experience in The Preface to the Phenomenology of Perception:

> . . . to return to things in themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge of which knowledge always speaks, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is.[9]

It is in the silence of primary consciousness that Merleau-Ponty finds essence and existence blending, and reminds us that the "eidetic reduction is . . . the determination to bring the world to light as it is before any falling back on ourselves has occurred, it is the ambition to make reflection emulate the unreflective life of consciousness."[10]

The theory of inner temporality mirrors the distinction made earlier between experience in the world and education. As there is a double awareness, both of my encounters in the world and of the experience of that encounter extended through my own inner time, so is there the double awareness in Currere, at once a transcendent and an immanent process, constituting meanings in subjectivity of its being in the world.

Husserl's principles of association and passive genesis link all our synthetic organizations of meaning to the world as we receive it in these primal encounters,

and each judgment is both derived from these encounters and subjected to confirmation or repudiation by subsequent encounters--enacting once again the dialectic that is the basis of educational experience, the dialectic between objectivity, the encounter in the world experienced in inner temporality, and subjectivity, the judgment drawn from that encounter.

Research in education has understandably hovered around the end products of that process of consciousness described by Husserl, those synthetic judgments, concepts, abstractions that we call knowledge. Currere would reach under these structures to the pre-conceptual encounters that are their foundation.

If the epoche can, as Merleau-Ponty maintains, "slacken the intentional threads which attach us to the world and thus bring them to our notice," then perhaps the psycho-analytic process suggested by William Pinar would also contribute to the developmental capacity to reach back through our experience to the pre-conceptual encounter that is the foundation of our judgments. Pinar suggests that when we misunderstand ourselves, we misunderstood our world.

In "Search For a Method," he describes a research method that would attempt a phenomenological description of both subject and object, requiring knowledge of self as knower of the world, tracing the sinuous path from pre-conceptual experience to intellection. The journals of William Butler Yeats offer another version of this objective/subjective symbiosis; by understanding the world, I understand myself.

> The soul becomes a mirror not a brazier. This culture is really the pursuit of self knowledge insofar as the self is a calm, deliberating, discriminating thing, for when we have awakened our tastes and our criticism of the world as we taste it, we have come to know ourselves; ourselves, I mean, not as misers or spendthrifts, as magistrates or pleaders, but as men, as souls face to face with what is permanent in the world.[11]

Yeats' description of educational experience confirms Merleau-Ponty's conviction that phenomenology puts essences back into existence. Here we meet subjectivity meeting itself through its projection into the objectivities of art. In the research method described by Pinar, Currere is pursued not in a reflective retreat from the world but through a response to literature. The method provides

both an encounter with objectivity and a microcosm, which, unlike the real world's constant flux, is fixed in the permanence of the written word, making it accessible to other subjectivities and future encounters.

Even though he distrusted the products of reflection, maintaining that "my 'I' is no more certain for my consciousness that the 'I' of other men," Jean-Paul Sartre did concede that glimpses of the self could be caught hovering on the horizons of one's actions, as projections of self into the world.[12] Glimpsing the self, as Yeats suggests, in one's response to culture, is phenomenologically mapped out by Sartre in his descriptions of the audience's response to Jean Genet's plays. Although Sartre insists that culture can't justify man's existence, in the Words he also identifies it as a source of self-knowledge; "it is a product of man; he projects himself into it, that critical mirror alone offers him his image."

As a research methodology Currere proposes to use literature as a foil for one's own reflection. As the reader voluntarily recreates that which the writer discloses, he too creates a fictive world, drawn from the substance of his experience and his fantasy. This participation in an aesthetic experience is one way of demonstrating the reciprocity of objectivity and subjectivity and their interdependence; it extends to the researcher the artist's awareness that his subjectivity transforms any objectivity it seeks to describe.

The aesthetic process and phenomenological description share an estrangement, a distancing from the every-day world in order to see the familiar with the freshness and immediacy of the vision that is seeing for the first time.

Perhaps you can remember the first tour you took of the neighborhood or town where you now live. Sometimes a memory from that first view persists, the outline is there, the silhouette of houses on maze-like streets. The dimensions assumed by the local school, shopping center, restaurant were compromised even then as, they confirmed, undermined or surpassed your expectations (reminding us of the impossibility of restoring an absolutely original perception); those perceptions are all transformed now by your associations with the place, the meanings that saturate

each landmark. Both the phenomenological and aesthetic processes strip away those meanings not necessarily to repudiate them but to review them and to celebrate our freedom to reject or affirm them once more.

In his study of autobiography, Metaphors of Self, James Olney maintains that while it is true to say that one can see with no other eyes than one's own, it is also true to say that one can, after a manner, see oneself seeing with those eyes. That perspective requires distancing and it was to this end that Edmund Husserl urged a mental discipline of abstention from the natural attitude.

The natural attitude is man's common-sense, unexamined orientation to the world which sees the old neighborhood, real rainbows ending in imaginary pots of gold, good men and bad men, facts and lies. The phenomenological reduction or "epoche" brackets our convictions and prejudices so that we may examine the world in its primordialness, as it gives itself to consciousness. The epoche is designed to cleanse the field of consciousness so that we may see, feel, imagine the essential form of a thing. The essence embodied in concrete experience is scoured of irrelevancies, distortions and confusions until only its pure, irreducible and necessary form emerges. As Olney's study of the autobiographies of Montaigne, Darwin, Mill and Jung reveals characteristics patterns and symbols recurring throughout them, so may Currere reveal through the autobiographic record of educational experience, through one's responses to literature, or mathematics, or science, essential recurring forms. An individual encounter in the world is consulted not to reveal the particular truth of its facticity, but its general truth as it emerges in a community of multiple subjectivities and is confirmed by subsequent encounters. In this respect there is no end to phenomenological research. There is always the possible negation of another subjectivity, of a whole new era of subjectivities released from the historicity of the last generation's view. Nevertheless, it was Husserl's aim, as it is Currere's to go through the particular to the general in order to grasp the essential structures of consciousness and the world.

For Heidegger and Sartre, Husserl's epoche was a retreat from the world of experience to a transcendental never-never land of ideal forms. Heidegger rejected any dualism that distinguished consciousness from its objects. Dismissing ego, cogito, Dasein became the only domain of consciousness, being-in-the-world.

Merleau-Ponty attempted to rescue the essences and the epoche from the repudiations of Sartre and Heidegger. He asserted that the essences are located in existence and maintained that the epoche need not divert our attention from being-in-the-world but that "it helps us to see the ordinary as strange and in need of some explanation."[13] This scrutiny of what is ordinary requires a critical approach to the social and political environment, for the "ordinary is a social concept, an unquestioned assumption of the natural attitude. For these existential philosophers, the "ordinary" became the signpost for an intellectual, moral and spiritual morass. Nietzsche, Kierkegaard Sartre urged man to reclaim his intuition, wrenching it from the fallacies that parade as society's doctrines, moralities, institutions.

Kierkegaard subjected theordinary to his scathing humor. He saw the social systems and customs of his world as ridiculous structures erected in fear to protect the citizens from the anguish of infinite possibility and the terror of faith. In Husserl's scheme infinite possibility was part of an intellectual process leading to the eidetic reduction; because he directed his inquiry toward knowledge of the world rather than action in the world, infinite possibility held none of the anguish for him that it did for Kiekegaard, or that Sartre's version of infinite possibility, the nothingness that afflicts consciousness, held for him. Kierkegaard's prisoner of the ordinary rushes to identification in the certainty and shelter of type, an ethical, aesthetic or religious model to guide his choices. Condemned to meaning, man must, as Sartre insists, choose himself, and Nietzsche ridicules his cowardice, seeking immunity from choice in the complicity of the herd and the passivity of religion, the ascetic ideal that fabricates the ornate burden of original sin to justify the meaningless suffering of existence. Both Nietzsche and Kierkegaard saw the "ordinary as strange

and in need of some explanation" and attacked the rational systems of thought represented in the philosophies of their contemporaries as mass-delusion. Nietzsche celebrated the freedom of man's will, allowing consciousness to be the author of the ego, he glorified man's power to turn in upon himself and violently strip away his old values and ideals in order to know his experience of the world.

In the process of designating and ridiculing the misunderstandings that shape men's lives, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and Sartre exposed and excoriated the myths of culture that lure man away from his ambiguous experience to their chimerical certainty. Sartre internalized the conflict even further, identifying man's flight from his authentic self as a flight from the nothingness that is his consciousness. Flight into the impostures of bad faith reifies possibilities into habits, rituals that permit man to evade the responsibility for his own existence.

Even if Husserl's initial impulse toward phenomenology was to delve through lived experience in order to salvage certain knowledge in essential forms, the epoche is a rationalized version of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard's rage against the conceptual intrusions perpetrated by society in the name of culture, science religion and character. The phenomenological injunction, "back to the things themselves" establishes a perspective that frees us from our common assumptions and presuppositions so that we may see through them to the world of our experience.

The researcher who scrutinizes one person's account of his experience must consider the very issues that were debated by Husserl and his existential progeny. To what degree does reflection, even when subjected to rigorous discipline, distort experience to fit idealized forms? Does the distancing required by the phenomenological perspective break the bonds of commitment and action that tie us to the real world? Who is the self that we attend? Is the reflecting self continuous with the acting self? Do our multiple social roles splinter the self into situational poses strung along a temporal chain?

We must be reminded that the methodology of the empiricist does not avoid these quandries. They are disguised in an empirical ritual that avoids confrontation with the whole by its atomization, a scrutiny of parts, and by a series of controls that creates an unreal world as a backdrop for one antic variable.

In contrast, Currere is rooted in context. It sees man, as does existential phenomenology, in situation. Here it entertains the thought of Paulo Friere and Louis Kampf which maintain that every aspect of a person's interaction with culture, language and his fellow man is saturated with his political reality. In "Search for a Method" William Pinar proposes to study both the individual's subjectivity and the impact of his social milieu upon it. While Currere presupposes a continuity of ego that will justify a concern for the impact of biography upon the present choice, as in existential psycho-analysis, it is also cognizant of the impact of milieu and attempts to address the political present and the subjective past simultaneously.

Whereas education has often been described as acculturation, the initiation of the child into the distinctive codes and rituals of the society, a phenomenology of educational experience examines the impact of acculturation on the shaping of one's cognitive lens. Existentialism recognizes culture as the given situation, with all its facticity, through which the individual expresses his subjectivity, embodied in acts in the world. Awareness of self develops not in hermitic introspection but in the response of subjectivity to objectivity. Thus, that culture that we present to our students is in Sartre's dialectic an objectivity to be surpassed, as every man is free to make more of what has been made of him. Creative consciousness, which is existence, is in Sartre's dynamic view, a transformation of one objective reality into another.

William Pinar's proposed study of literary response is designed to record the lived experience of the reader, the response of his subjectivity to this encounter with the text. Thus extending traditions of phenomenology and existentialism it is an initial step in the research of Currere, educational experience. As phenomenology repudiated psychologism and empiricism, as existentialism repudiated idealism, Currere repudiates behaviorism and technocracy. Husserl's reply to the determinism of psychologism was the individual's intentional consciousness,

endowed with the ability to intuit essences, emerging within the integrity of its own history and character as they develop in the Lebenswelt. Sartre's reply to the determinism of the ego and the unconscious was to liberate the individual from his history in order to have him realize his innate freedom, first in leaps to nothingness, then in action in the world.

Currere's reply to the traditional empirical paradigm is a return to the experience of the individual, respecting all those qualities which disqualify it for consideration in the behavioral sciences: its idiosyncratic history, its preconceptual foundation, its contextual dependency, its innate freedom expressed in choice and self-direction.

As educators we alone must bring into being the tradition which we elect to carry on; existential phenomenology requires action as well as theory. Levinas' criticism of Husserl's pursuit of certain knowledge is pertinent here:

> Is our first attitude in the presence of the real the attitude of theoretic contemplation? Does the world not manifest its very being as a center of action, a field of activity or concern. . .?[14]

If the philosophies of phenomenology and existentialism cannot, by definition, prescribe our actions, they can inform them. (One such informed action is proposed and described in the appendix to this paper.)

Conclusion

The path of reconceptualized inquiry leads us inward, to individual experience and outward to meta-theory. Employing the critical distance of the epoche, research into the experience of education reaches back first to the pre-predicative encounter, the lived sense that is a sine qua non for a conceptual hability. It then reconstructs the pathway to the present choice by digging back under the layers of one's biography to identify the encounters that led to it.

The other, broader application of phenomenological description is proposed in Maurice Roche's examination of the social sciences and in Habermas' Knowledge and Human Interests. The theory laden perspectives of sociology and psychology, disciplines strongly influencing educational theory, relinquish their basic

assumptions to phenomenological probing. This is to say, we will attempt to describe educational experience in its most particularized incarnation, the history and response of the individual, and in its most general expression, the interpretations of human experience that characterize the conceptual frameworks of the disciplines that shape educational research.

Finally, as practitioners, beings in a world that requires choice and action, the debates of Husserl and his existential commentators suggest the following concerns. How does educational experience shape the cognitive lens, change the vision so that the world is, in fact, encountered differently? Does one kind of lens preclude another? If one could, and that is questionable, alter another's world view (the kind of conceptual organization described by Norwood Hanson) on what grounds, if any, is that intrusion justified? How can the educator reconcile the phenomenologist's call for detached speculation with the existentialist's emphasis on situation and action in the world?

Currere may not effect the total reconciliation of objectivity and subjectivity in educational research, but it does commit us to acknowledge the paradox, if that is our experience. In The Ethics of Ambiguity Simone de Beauvoir praises paradox, its mysterious freedoms and awesome responsibilities: "the antimonies that exist between means and ends, present and future, they must be lived in a permanent tension." Employing the epoche she urges the kind of cruel scrutiny that Currere requires: "In setting up its ends, freedom must put them in parentheses, confront them at each moment with that absolute end which it itself constitutes, and contest in its name the means it uses to win itself."[15]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Beauvoir, Simone de, The Ethics of Ambiguity, Translated by Bernard Frechtman. New York: Philosophical Library, 1948.

Blackman, H. J., ed., Reality, Man and Existence: Essential Works of Existentialism, New York: Beantam Books, 1965.

Denton, David E. Editor. Existentialism and Phenomenology in Education. New York: Teachers College Press, 1974.

Greene, Maxine. Teacher As Stranger, Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1973.

Habermas, Jurgen. Knowledge and Human Interests. Translated by Jeremy Shapiro. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.

Hampden-Turner, Charles. Radical Man. New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1971.

Hanson, Norwood ~~Hanson, Noswood~~. Patterns of Discovery. Cambridge: The University Press, 1958.

Harre, R. and Secord, P. F. The Explanation of Social Behavior. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell and Mott, 1972.

Husserl, Edmund. Cartesian Meditations. Translated by Dorion Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970.

Husserl, Edmund. Ideas. Translated by W. R. Boyer Gibson, New York: Collier Books, 1962.

Husserl, Edmund. The Idea of Phenomenology. Translated by William P. Alston and George Nahnikian. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973.

Husserl, Edmund. The Paris Lectures, Translated by Peter Koestenbaum. The Hague: Martinus Nijohoff, 1964.

Jones, E. and Nisbett R. "The Actor and the Observor: Divergent Perceptions of the Causes of Behavior: in Attribution edited by E. Jones et. al. Morristown, New Jersey: Greater Learning Press, 1971.

Kocklemans, Joseph J. Editor, Phenomenology. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul., 1962.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. The Structure of Behavior, Translated by Alden L. Fisher, Boston: Beacon Press, 1963.

Pinar, William. "Search For a Method" in Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists Edited by William Pinar, Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corp. 1975.

Richards, Mary Caroline. The Crossing Point, Middletown Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1973.

Riegel, Klaus. "Dialectical Operations: The Final period of cognitive development". Research Bulletin. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service. Jan. 1973.

Roche, Maurice. Phenomenology, Language and the Social Sciences, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. Search for a Method. Translated by Hazel Barnes, New York: Random House, 1963.

Sartre, Jean-Paul, The Transcendence of the Ego. Translated by Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatrick. New York: Octagon Books, 1972.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. The Words. Translated by Bernard Frechtman. Greenwich, Conn: Fawcett Publications, 1964.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. What is Literature. Translated by Bernard Frechtman, New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

Sokolowski, Robert. The Formation of Husserl's Concept of Constitution. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970.

Thompson, William I. Passages About Earth, New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

Turner, Terence. "Piaget's Structuralism", American Authropologist. Apr. 1973, Vol. 75, No. 2.

Yeats, William Butler, Memoirs, edited by Denis Donoghue, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1973.

REFERENCES

1. Mary Caroline Richards. The Crossing Point, (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press. 1973).

2. William Pinar "Search for a Method? in Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists, Edited by William Pinar (Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corp.) 1975.

3. Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Phenomenology of Perception (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1962).

4. Klaus, Riegel. 'Dialectical Operations:' The final period of cognitive development. Research Bulletin. (Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, Jan. 1973).

5. Charles Hampden-Turner. Radical Man (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1971.

6. J. Gordon Chamberlin. "Phenomenological Methodology and Understanding Education" in Existentionalism and Phenomenology in Education, Edited by David E. Denton (New York: Teachers College Press, 1974).

7. R. Harre and P. F. Secord. The Explanation of Social Behavior (Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell and Mott, 1972).

8. Edmund Husserl. The Paris Lectures Translated by Peter Koestenbaum. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964).

9. Merleau-Ponty, op. cit.

10. Ibid.

11. William Butler Yeats, Memoirs Edited by Denis Donoghue (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1973)

12. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Transcendence of the Ego. Translated by Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatrick (New York: Octagon Books, 1972).

13. Maurice Roche. Phenomenology, Language and the Social Sciences (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973.)

14. Emmanuel Levinas "Intuition of Essences" in Phenomenology edited by J. Kocklemans (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1967.)

15. Simone de Beauvoir, The Ethics of Ambiguity. Translated by Bernard Frechtman (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948).

16. I would like to thank two of my professors at the University of Rochester, Harmon Holcomb of the Philosophy department, and Michael Chandler, of the Psychology department, for the contributions that they have made to my understanding of their disciplines.